

Las Vegas. Think Forward.

CITY OF LAS VEGAS **REPORT CARD**



JULY 2011



INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

REPORT CARD GRADING SYSTEM AND SUMMARY

A world-class city like Las Vegas is full of excitement and activities, but among all the fun is a serious place where people choose not only to play, but to live as well. The city of Las Vegas is charged with creating a place where individuals feel safe, have sufficient business opportunities and are connected to their community, among other things. This is a tough job and with everything going on it is sometimes hard to stop and reflect on how well the city is meeting the expectations of its citizens.

The Las Vegas City Council created priorities that provide a vision for the entire city including residents, businesses, visitors and employees. These priorities are wide reaching and include those things which make Las Vegas a world-class city.

Measurements were developed for each of these priorities that will help the city tell the story as to how it's doing. This city "report card" was developed to provide a snapshot into the city's performance. While many of these measurements have data to help paint a picture, some are new and there is no data to measure yet. For those measurements without data, baseline information has been or is currently being gathered and will be compared to data gathered in future years.

Turn Over - continued on next page.

CITY PRIORITY	GRADE (Out of 5 possible stars for each priority)
Sustainable, Livable Neighborhoods	★★★★★
Vibrant Urban Fabric	★★★
Fiscally Sound Government	★★★★★
Pro-Business Environment	★★★
Safe City	★★★★★
Citizen Engagement	★★★★★

RATING SYSTEM EXPLANATION

The measurements within each priority were given a weight based upon their relative importance as compared against the other measurements within that priority. If the data for the measurement show a better or neutral performance, then all the weighted points for that measurement are given. For example, if a measurement is given a weight of five and the trend is positive, then all five points will be awarded. If the trend for the measurement is worse, then no weighted points are given. The weighted points are added together for each measurement with the total score being a possible 20 points. The points are then converted to a star rating system using an equation of four points equals one star. The highest possible grade in each measurement is five stars (20 points). ★



SUSTAINABLE, LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS







SUSTAINABLE, LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

BACKGROUND

Part of the mission of the city of Las Vegas is to enhance residents' quality of life through planning and visionary leadership. People want to live in neighborhoods that provide a good place to raise families and that have a variety of choices in housing, recreation and services. In short, citizens want neighborhoods that are livable. In addition, residents seek neighborhoods that are sustainable, meaning they protect current resources so that those resources will still be available to future generations.

MEASUREMENTS AND GRADE EVALUATION

Measurement	Trend
Value of building permits in the Neighborhood Revitalization Area	
1/8 square miles that meet the standards of a stable neighborhood	
Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions	
Recreation programs that benefit the community as well as the individual	

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The highest weighted measure within this priority has to do with what is defined as a “stable neighborhood.” When evaluating whether a neighborhood is stable, we look at crime statistics (burglaries, robberies, stolen vehicles, assault and battery and illegal shooting), property maintenance incidents (trash, debris, high weeds, outside storage), and graffiti incidents. We have had fewer crimes, property maintenance and graffiti incidents in city neighborhoods in 2010 as compared to 2009. In 2012, we plan to include foreclosure and unemployment data in the index to give us a better picture of the neighborhood’s stability.★





VIBRANT URBAN FABRIC






VIBRANT URBAN FABRIC

BACKGROUND

Vibrant urban fabric means creating an environment at the core of the city where people choose to live, work and play. Establishing a mix of housing along with shops, parks, and educational and cultural amenities is key to the city's redevelopment efforts. Urban housing will provide a steady client base for services and shops, entertainment and restaurants, allowing downtown to become a cultural and economic center for the entire community. Simply put, having a vibrant urban core means that people live there, and the people who don't live there want to spend time there.

MEASUREMENTS AND RATINGS EVALUATION

Measurement	Trend
Private investment in the Redevelopment Area (taxable value)	
Population in the Neighborhood Revitalization Area	
Employment in the Neighborhood Revitalization Area	

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The overall trend within this priority is negative. For example, in regards to the investment in the Redevelopment Area, although we experienced substantial growth in this measure for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 (75 and 12 percent, respectively), the continuing effects of the recession into calendar year 2010 resulted in the most significant valuation decrease since the inception of the Redevelopment Area, a loss of \$2.9 billion in taxable value, or a 56 percent decrease for fiscal year 2011. Both population and employment in the NRA have seen a decrease as well.

However, what the measurements don't show is the energy within downtown Las Vegas and examples of how the city of Las Vegas is reaching out to new businesses and successfully luring them to the city. For examples in Fiscal Year 2010, 5,822 construction jobs, 3,810 permanent jobs and projects valued at \$1.411 billion were created through the agency's redevelopment efforts. Plans have also been finalized to relocate the headquarters of Zappos.com to downtown Las Vegas to the current City Hall site. Work continues on the new City Hall site and surrounding area projects such as the Smith Center for the Performing Arts and the Las Vegas Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement. These activities will bring thousands of people downtown and with new businesses continuing to pop up in the Fremont East District, many will not only work in the downtown area, but play there as well. ★



FISCALLY SOUND GOVERNMENT







FISCALLY SOUND GOVERNMENT

BACKGROUND

It is no secret that southern Nevada has been hit especially hard by the economic recession of the last several years and while the city is seeing signs of recovery, it may still take a long time until we recover. During these tough economic times, the city has seen a sharp decrease in revenues and as a result the city has had to make some very difficult decisions during the past year and a half. The goal during this entire period has been to retain service levels and jobs and this priority and its measurements are key to us reaching this goal.

MEASUREMENTS AND RATINGS EVALUATION

Measurements	Trend
Cost recovery for services provided	
Decline in wages and benefits	
City's bond ratings of AA or higher	
City's liabilities as a percentage of the General Fund balance	

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The most weighted measurement in this priority has to do with wage and benefit growth for the average full-time employee. The past year has been particularly successful in this arena. In 2010, the city saw a net decrease in benefit growth and wages for city employees.

The city arrived at this point after making some tough decisions. Faced with a \$400 million budget shortfall, the city cut programs, cut operational expenses and eliminated some 600 positions, but still had more to do. The city's represented employees agreed to concessions that save the city more than \$36 million over the next two fiscal years, representing 9.4 percent in reductions of pay and benefits from 2009 to 2010. The unions also agreed to a reclassification of nearly 600 positions to better reflect the current economy, and new hires will see reductions in pay and benefits. In addition, the city reorganized the management and administration of the city, cutting staff in these areas by 25 percent. Executive positions have been reduced by 28 percent, and their average compensation has dropped by 8 percent. ★



PRO-BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT







PRO-BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND

Las Vegas' continued growth is heavily reliant on the business community, and the city wants to make sure it is doing everything it can to create jobs in our community. In addition to the business incentives the city offers for projects located in the Redevelopment Area, the city has also been working on streamlining the development review process, which includes business licensing.

MEASUREMENTS AND RATINGS EVALUATION

Measurement	Trend
Employment in the city	
Employment diversification	
Wage levels	
Vacant land zoned for commercial use	
Improvement in development process timelines	No data

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Trending for this priority in terms of employment is down as the city has seen a decrease in employment numbers and median income. The city is currently developing baseline data for Development Services Process (DSP) timelines and will be comparing this to future data.

The city is currently putting a heavy emphasis on creating a friendlier environment for businesses which are interested in operating within the city. Two areas in which the city feels will make a big impact on creating this friendlier environment include the DSP and business licensing.

- **Development services process (DSP)- The city is retooling this process, which includes all the steps one must go through to obtain permits and other documents needed during the building and planning process.**
- **Business licensing - The city is looking at the numerous license categories to see if there is a way to decrease that number. The other focus is centered on trying to improve the turnaround times for those applying for business licenses. ★**



SAFE CITY








SAFE CITY

BACKGROUND

One thing that attracts and retains individuals to a community is a feeling of safety. But individuals are looking for more beyond “safety” in the traditional sense of the word. It goes beyond the expected crime statistics, and includes such things as traffic safety, and safety as it relates to fires and medical situations.

MEASUREMENTS AND RATINGS EVALUATION

Measurement	Trend
Violent crimes and domestic violence statistics	
Fires within the city confined to room of origin	
Life threatening medical calls responded to by emergency units within 5 min., 12 sec. after leaving the station	
Cardiac arrest patients who survive to hospital discharge	
Injuries and fatality accidents mitigated due to traffic improvements	

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The trending for this priority is very positive. The two most heavily-weighted measurements deal with crime statistics and medical response time to life threatening medical calls.

Crime statistics show that the city has become a safer place to live over the past two years. The crime data is based on the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's calls for service. From 2009 to 2010:

- **Violent crime calls for service decreased by five percent**
- **Domestic violence calls for service decreased by 4.6 percent**
- **Property crime calls for service decreased by 19 percent**

In Fiscal Year 2010 emergency medical response personnel from the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas and Clark County improved their rate of arriving at the scene of life threatening medical incidents within Las Vegas city limits in 5 minutes, 12 seconds or less.

- **Fiscal Year 2010 – 80 percent arrived in 5 minutes, 12 seconds or less**
- **Fiscal Year 2009 – 77.7 percent arrived in 5 minutes, 12 seconds or less. ★**



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT



CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

When people are attached to where they live, the community is better off both socially and economically. Engaged citizens give back to their community by voting, attending community meetings, and volunteering their time.

MEASUREMENTS AND RESULTS EVALUATION

Measurement	Trend
Voter turnout in 2007 and 2011	
Citizen satisfaction with Las Vegas	
Volunteerism supporting city of Las Vegas activities and attendance at city of Las Vegas community meetings	No trend
Official city of Las Vegas social media opportunities	

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One of the best indicators of citizen engagement is voter turnout. The city saw an increase in voter turnout when comparing two general elections in 2007 and 2011.

- **2011 – 24.57% voter turnout**
- **2007 – 8.46 % voter turnout**

The city of Las Vegas conducted a citizen survey in October 2010. The statistically significant response from 323 voters identified which services provide the greatest leverage on their overall satisfaction, and how satisfaction influences the community's image and citizen behaviors such as volunteering, remaining in the community, recommending it to others, and supporting the current administration. Overall, citizens scored their satisfaction with Las Vegas at 59 on a scale from zero to 100, with 100 the highest possible score. This is slightly below the score for similarly sized western cities, which have an overall score of 63. As satisfaction increases, citizens become more engaged through a number of behaviors. Citizens scored their current likelihood to do the following behaviors: recommend Las Vegas as a place to live (51); volunteer (48); remain living in Las Vegas five years from now (65); encourage someone to start a business in Las Vegas (45); and support the current city of Las Vegas government administration (48). The next time the city conducts this survey, we will have good data to determine if the work that we are doing is leading to more citizen engagement. ★

LOOKING FORWARD ...

This report card lets us not only look back, but look ahead and plan accordingly as a city. Throughout the document many benchmarks were set that the city can use as we strive to provide services to our citizens in an efficient, fiscally responsible manner. Our city leaders now have a better idea of areas in our community that have been successful and things that are falling below not only our expectations, but those of our citizens. It provides a “blueprint” as to where the city needs to focus its attention as an organization and creates a standard means of monitoring the progress of our key initiatives and priorities from year to year. ★

For more information, please contact Maggie Plaster, assistant to the city manager, at (702) 229-5918.

